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CA Press Guidance
November 15, 1978

CONGRESSMAN RYAN'S VISIT TO GUYANA

The Embassy in Georgetown has been authorized to make following statement available to media and concerned parents on "if asked" basis: QUOTE: The People's Temple community at Jonestown is a group of private American citizens who have chosen to come to Guyana as permanent or semi-permanent residents. As with private American citizens residing anywhere abroad, they are subject to the laws and regulations of the host country, in this case Guyana. The American Embassy in Georgetown has no official contact with the People's Temple other than the provision of normal consular services to the individual members of this community on a regular basis. These services include renewal of passports, registration of births, etc. The Embassy has no official authority over the community or its individual members. Except as provided for in the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations and in the bilateral consular convention that is in force between our two countries, the Embassy does not have any legal right to demand access to any private American citizen in Guyana. In light of this, the Embassy has no authority to require contacts between members of the People's Temple and persons whom they do not wish to receive. The members of the People's Temple are protected by the Privacy Act of 1974, as are all American citizens. UNQUOTE.

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